



DEAF ACCESS SERVICES
an affiliate of People Inc.

Fall 2021 Biannual Newsletter



Deaf Access Services responds to the interests of Deaf and hard of hearing people by promoting communication access, awareness and opportunities in the greater community.

Interpreting Services FAQs

Q: How are interpreters scheduled?

A: We accept requests for services through three methods:

1. Online scheduling system, which also provides access to Video Remote Interpreting.
2. Phone: directly contact the Interpreting Department by calling **716.535.1603**
3. Email to Interpreting Department at: InterpretingServices@wnydas.org

Once we receive a request, all potentially available interpreters are notified. Interpreters respond directly in our system to indicate availability. We schedule the interpreter based on the following criteria:

- Preference
- Certification/Qualifications/Familiarity with the assignment/client/situation
- Years of experience

Q: What do I do if a client cancels their appointment?

A: Please call us as soon as possible to inform us of the cancellation to avoid being charged for services or for a last-minute cancellation. We have a 24-hour (one business day) cancellation policy to help providers avoid unnecessary cancellation costs. If you have access to our online scheduling platform, you can cancel any request easily by logging in, opening the service request and clicking cancel in the top right of the window.

Q: Who should request?

A: Interpreter requests should always come from the service provider(s). We will never send interpreters to a service provider based on a community member calling us, however we will reach out to advocate on their behalf should we need to. This ensures providers are only billed for appointments they themselves have requested.

Q: I have a recurring appointment that needs an interpreter, what should I do?

A: If an appointment is recurring, we encourage you to schedule these as far in advance as possible. We can enter these in our system or as a requester through a service provider, you have the ability to use the online scheduling platform to also enter these appointments.

Q: How far in advance should I request an interpreter for my appointment?

A: The more notice, the better! Our interpreters are independently contracted and often work for multiple agencies, their schedules are often filled up in advance. We recommend that when a Deaf client schedules with you, contact us right away to schedule the interpreter. Should you not have access to our online scheduling platform at this time, we recommend reaching out to our Interpreting Department staff and getting set up. **Contact us at 716.535.1603.**

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Message from the Director

Dear Friends,



It has been a busy start to the 2021 year and we couldn't be happier. With COVID-19, many services moved to online platforms and video conferencing. Deaf Access Services was still able to provide services to more than 575 clients through over 14,000 hours of interpreting in 2020. Plus, we started this year strong with over 4,500 hours in the first few months.

As a nonprofit agency, we depend on our interpreting services, donations and fundraising activities to financially support the programs and services we offer, at little or often no cost to the community. As the only Deaf and hard of hearing focused nonprofit in the region providing many unique services, we continue to reach people and communities who benefit. These services include advocacy, education and training, community service navigation, career pathways – employment and transition services and New American programming.

While our interpreting services are our primary source of revenue, we still require additional financial support. I am aware that every community member may not access our services, however there are many who depend on our services. Circumstances change and we are available for everyone, should the need arise.

I would like to thank our sponsors, our staff and all of the people who participated in our 2021 fundraising event in April.

Through our affiliation with People Inc., our capacity is growing. We are collaborating with more agencies – we are reaching more people through our services and our training. One way we are making an impact is through our work with the People Inc. Senior Services Department. We have been able to influence these services so that older adults who are Deaf and hard of hearing can not only learn about services available to them, but also access these important services.

I am happy to see us off to such a great start in 2021 and I look forward to what the remainder of the year will bring as we see businesses opening, families coming together and our community reconnecting.

I hope you are able to get out and enjoy the beautiful weather and quality time with those you have missed over the past year. Please also remember to continue supporting Deaf Access Services and all of the work we are doing to serve the community locally, as well as at state and national levels.

Warm Regards,



Jodie Chibi
Director, Deaf Access Services

Career Pathways

For the past two years, Deaf Access Services has been working to create a strong connection with Deaf and hard of hearing students transitioning out of high school and entering the work world and higher education. St Mary's School for the Deaf and Deaf Access Services have collaborated with ACCES-VR to prepare students, as young as age 14, to start thinking about their goals post-graduation. We have worked remotely during COVID-19, holding weekly classes and have supported four graduating students. Next year, the goal is to reach students as they enter high school, serving over 20 students. Deaf Access Services plans to begin working with all school districts to offer these services to mainstreamed students as well. If you are interested in participating or know of a school district

that could benefit from this collaboration, contact the Deaf Access Services Career Pathways Program at 716.833.1637, ext. 108.



City of Buffalo Updates!

Recently, staff members of Deaf Access Services, an affiliate of People Inc., and People Inc. met with Buffalo Mayor Byron W. Brown and his team to discuss the many ways our agencies can work together to make the city more accessible to the Deaf and hard of hearing community. We are grateful to everyone who helped to make this meeting possible! It was a great step towards making the City of Buffalo even more inclusive.



Why Family Members Should Not Be Your Interpreter

The intimate details of your life are private, and having an interpreter present can sometimes feel intimidating and uncomfortable. It may feel comforting to ask family members to interpret for you. However, here are the reasons why this is rarely the best thing to do:

1. Professional Interpreters: Interpreters go through intense training. The process may seem simple, however, interpreters spend extensive time learning the skill of interpreting effectively between languages. While family members may be fluent in more than one language, they may not be fluent in all of the specialized terminology used in legal, medical or technical settings necessary for interpreting. Beyond school, interpreters participate in regular professional development opportunities – these are especially important once interpreter obtains certification. Failure to earn credits for professional development will cause an interpreter to lose certification.

2. Impartiality: It may be impossible for human beings to disconnect emotionally from their loved ones. In an attempt to avoid confusion or upsetting a loved one by delivering bad news, a friend or family member may add their own opinions or withhold

crucial parts of the message being conveyed. This is not ideal behavior for an interpreter, nor in your best interest. A qualified interpreter is trained to be an impartial communication facilitator of often sensitive information, to use sound ethical judgement, and to maintain the strictest of confidence about all interpreted information.

3. Inaccuracies: Errors and inaccurate interpretations have consequences, sometimes serious and life-threatening.

4. Stress on Relationships: Many children feel a responsibility for interpreting for their parents. This can cause stress and strain on relationships, when taken to extremes.

We hope you will consider entrusting us with your interpreting needs. You are encouraged to consider the work professional interpreters have done to earn their credentials, and the ongoing work involved in maintaining them. Don't use friends and family members to interpret, instead allow these loved ones do what they do best – provide comfort, love and support.

For information about interpreting services, contact our staff at **716.833.1637**.

Deaf Advisory Council

Deaf Access Services is now seeking Deaf and hard of hearing community members who are interested in making a difference within the community by joining the deaf advisory council.

If you are interested in participating in our advisory council and contributing to the work we are doing in the region or if you are interested in learning more, contact Jodie Chibi at JChibi@wnydas.org.

ASL Program

We are receiving increasing requests for ASL classes. It is great to see a desire for people to understand the fundamentals of ASL and the basics necessary to communicate. Our community classes resume September 20th, however if you are interested and missed registration, the information for the next session will be coming towards the end of the year.

If you are interested in private lessons, or have a group of people interested in learning about ASL and Deaf culture, contact us at communications@wnydas.org.

If you are interested in teaching ASL, contact David at communications@wnydas.org to submit your resume.

Lots of New Beginnings

On behalf of the DAS staff, we want to pass along congratulations to each of you at the new chapters in your lives wanted to pass along congratulations. If you know of anyone else we can recognize, feel free to contact us.



Congratulations

Bid Farewell to our interpreter, Ashley

Ashley started with Deaf Access Services during her school internship from Bethel University in Indiana in 2019. She relocated to Buffalo and has been interpreting in the community ever since. At the end of August, Ashley will be moving back to Ohio to be closer to her family and starting a new chapter in her life. Though we will miss her, we are glad to have had the opportunity to help her learn and develop as an interpreter.

The staff of Deaf Access Services thanks Ashley for her time, hard work and dedication. We are confident you will continue to do great work and wish you all the best!



Flag Raising Ceremony

Community members are welcome to join us for a brief ceremony Monday, September 20, at noon, at Buffalo City Hall. The flag raising is presented by Deaf Access Services, Erie County Office for People with Disabilities and People Inc.

For more information, contact David Wantuck at dwantuck@wnydas.org.



The image on the left is the Global Flag for the Deaf Communities. Light blue represents how the Deaf community cherishes Sign Language. Gold symbolizes light, hope, knowledge, and enlightenment. Dark Blue indicates Deafhood, an individual and collective journey to combat audism and embrace Deaf gain.

Financial support for personal needs available for Deaf and hard of hearing residents of New York State ages 55 and up

The Gallaudet Home Fund is available for qualified recipients to receive financial support for expenses such as the examples below.

Medical

- Wheelchair
- Cane
- Walker
- Raised toilet seat

Assistive Devices

- Teletypewriter (TTY) or Video Phone (VP)
- Doorbell, Signaler, Smoke Alarm and/or Telephone ringing light
- Alarm Clock suitable for each individual (flashing light or other means)

- Hearing Aid (Receipt must be furnished from Qualified Dealer (\$500 Maximum)

Recreational

- Elder/Senior Citizen Week Camp (Camp Mark Seven)
- Elder Hostel
- Continuing education in arts, crafts and retirement planning

If you are interested in applying, contact Gary Meyer, chair of Gallaudet Home Fund by email at GMeyer@DHHinsurance.com or by VP at 585.286.3442.

Staff Recognition

AmeriCorps

Shannon Patterson is the newest AmeriCorps member of our team. She joins us as the Special Projects and Program Support assistant in the Interpreting Department. After graduation in May 2021 from the Interpreting Program at Keuka College. Sharon looks forward to working and thriving with us. Welcome to the team, Shannon!

We also want to share a special congratulations to Shannon on her recent engagement! We wish you and Patrick all the best in the newest chapter of your lives together.



Shannon Patterson

Staff Spotlight – Andrea Russell

Our staff spotlight is Andrea Russell, our Community Services navigator and Employment specialist. As a community services navigator, Andrea provides direct support to Deaf and hard of hearing community members who need help connecting with accessible services in the community, applying for and navigating the local housing, understanding and completing complex applications and government processes, obtaining assistive technology, and advocacy support.

As an employment specialist Andrea supports clients seeking employment, whether currently employed and looking for a change or newly seeking employment. Working with New York State Education Department (NYSED) and the Adult Career and Continuing Education Services- Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR) program, Andrea supports community members applying for services. Following approval from NYSED she provides support during the entire job search process, helping clients find the job they really want.

Andrea is a valuable member of the DAS family and we want to thank her for all of her hard work and dedication to the community.



Andrea Russell

Events and Support!



We currently have Yoshi and Athena (both deaf) available for adoption. Both dogs are young and have an enthusiastic view on living! As a result of the shelter being understaffed and the struggle to be consistent in a high stress environment, we are not able to provide the one-on-one training they need. They desperately need to establish routines with owners who are willing to teach them how to communicate with humans.

If you are interested in meeting one or both of them-Please contact us at

<https://www.niagaraspca.org/contact>

YOSHI



1.5 years old

Microchipped & neutered

Brought in as a stray 141 days ago and his family never came for him

Would do best in a home without children

Reduced adoption fee of \$100.

ATHENA

1.5 years

Microchipped & spayed

Family surrendered her in December 2020 due to moving to a small apartment with no yard. She has been waiting for her person for 219 days!!!

Athena prefers a home without young children and other pets

Reduced adoption fee of \$100



Deaf Awareness Week, Third Week of September:

Deaf Awareness Week is a national week of celebrating Deafness. It is observed annually throughout the last full week of September. The week focuses on promoting the positive aspects of Deafness, encouraging social inclusion and raising awareness of the organizations that support those who are Deaf.

Giving Tuesday

First Tuesday after Thanksgiving: November 30: Giving Tuesday is a global generosity movement unleashing the power of people and organizations to transform their communities and the world.

Walk for Hearing – Where we call it WALK FOR DAS!

(Date to be Announced): Get together safely to take a walk to fundraise and support Deaf Access Services and the hearing loss community. 40% of the money raised, goes directly to Deaf Access Services.

Register at bit.ly/Walk4DAS2021.

26 Shirts:

With a HUGE success last year for the T-Shirt sale with BFLO, Deaf Access Services is working with St. Mary's School for the Deaf and 26 Shirts this year! The proceeds will go to St. Mary's School for the Deaf and Deaf Access Services. Shirts can be purchased at bit.ly/ASLshirt2021



The Children's Foundation of Erie County

Storytime AT CANALSIDE: A BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

Join us LIVE, Wednesdays at 10:30!

June 23: Looking Back at Our Roots: Indigenous Culture

June 30: All Hail the Chief: Buffalo Presidents

July 7: Wake Up & Smell the Cheerios: Buffalo Food

July 14: Paint the Town: Buffalo Art

July 21: Road to Freedom: The Underground Railroad

July 28: City of Light: The Pan-Am Expo

August 4: How We Roll: Buffalo Railroads

August 11: The City of Good Neighbors

August 18: 15 Miles on the Erie Canal: Buffalo Waterways

August 25: Make Me Wanna Shout: Buffalo Sports

Registration Required: TabacchiA@epicforchildren.org



Storytime **on**
SUPERSTREET

THURSDAYS
@10:30, July 1 - August 26
A celebration of literacy,
language and culture,
designed for ages
birth to 5
years

WHERE:
CLARK ST.
KENT ST.

REGISTER:
TabacchiA@epicforchildren.org

EPIC Every Person Influences Children
United Way
DAS DEAF ACCESS SERVICES

Deaf Community Panel – held March 18

In partnership between D'Youville College and DAS, this event was an opportunity for Deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing loss community members to discuss the experiences that shaped who they are today.

We had over 50 viewers join us for the event! Thank you to our panelists, Jacob Leffler, Cookie Jona Brand, and James Postell, Jr.



Jacob Leffler



Cookie Jona Brand



James Postell, Jr.

ASL at Home: Bridging the Gaps Between Deaf Communities and Speech and Hearing Professionals – held March 29

The Nazareth College Deafness Specialization Program (DSP) invited the community to attend the presentation virtually. It was presented by Dr. Leah Geer Zarchy and Razi M. Zarchy, authors of the ASL at

Home curriculum. They discussed how we can strengthen the relationships between deaf communities and speech/hearing professionals.

The Beginning of American Sign Language in the United States – held March 30

In partnership between D'Youville College and DAS, Pamela Conley....presented on the origins of American Sign Language and the history of the Deaf in America.

Lake Windfall movie – September 2021

Part 3 of the series created in partnership between D'Youville College and DAS, we will be showing this film on campus at D'Youville College in September. Watch our website for details to come. *Lake Windfall* is a 2013 American post-apocalyptic movie written by Tony Nitko and Roger Vass Jr, and directed by

Roger Vass Jr. The film was produced by Rustic Lantern Films, as subsidiary of Deaf Empowerment Awareness Foundation. The film focuses on the interactions among five friends who set off for a weekend of camping.

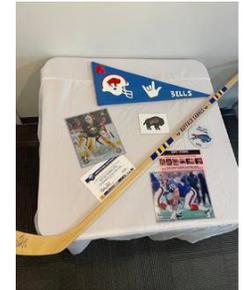
2021 Annual Fundraiser

Thank you to all of our sponsors, donors and participants! With your support, we raised over \$6000 to help continue providing our exceptional

services to the community. This year's fundraiser included BBQ dinners, a virtual tour of the Museum of Deaf History, Arts & Culture and an online auction.

Online Auction – held April 15

All of our auction items were generously donated by businesses and community members. Thank you!



Auctions items, listed left to right: Norwex: Home Cleaning Kit, Car Care Basket, Sports Memorabilia, Cedar Keepsake Memory Box.

BBQ Dinner and Virtual Museum Tour – held April 18



With BW's Smokin' Barrels Barbecue onsite, we sold BBQ chicken and rib dinners. Despite the unseasonably rainy and cool day, we saw a huge turnout! We sold over 250 dinners! Thank you to those who came out to support DAS!

In partnership with the Museum of Deaf History, Art and Culture in Kansas City, we were able to offer a virtual tour of the museum. This highlighted Deaf history and the contributions that have influenced the world. If you are interested in a virtual museum tour, contact, contact Museum of Deaf History, Arts and Culture at support@museumofdeaf.org.



Comic Strip: *That Deaf Guy!* by Matt and Kay Daigle



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©M&KDAIGLE

Want to get involved with the community?

Want to become more involved? Directly contact the below organizations or reach out to Deaf Access Services and our team will be happy to connect you!

Buffalo Civic Association of the Deaf:

Facebook.com/BCAdeafWNY

Empire State Association of the Deaf: esad.org

ESAD is having their biennial conference in October. More information is to follow. Please contact niagara@esad.org for more information.

Buffalo Implant Group: buffaloimplantgroup.com

ASL Buffalo: Want to join coffee chats? Socialize at Food Truck Tuesdays on Larkin Square? Visit ASL Buffalo on their Facebook Page at: facebook.com/aslbuffalo

St. Mary's School for the Deaf: Committed to providing equitable access to exemplary educational programs that prepare Deaf Students to be self-directed, lifelong learners, who are committed to being productive members of society. smsdk12.org

People Inc. News Services for Seniors and Older Adults



As an affiliate of People Inc., Deaf Access Services has had the opportunity to learn about all of the great programs that are offered and that ensure communication access for the Deaf community. We have learned about programs and opportunities, specific to our seniors, that may be of interest to you. Alicia Lombardo, Case Management coordinator, has provided a brief description as an introduction to the types of services available through People Inc.:



People Inc. Senior Outreach provides Case Management services to older adults (60 and over) to support them with Aging in Place in their own homes. Assessments are completed by a trained case manager to help develop a Person-Centered Care Plan for services including Meals on Wheels, Housekeeping, Home Care, Adult Day Care, SNAP, HEAP and much more. Services are provided to people residing in Grand Island, Tonawanda (city and town), Kenmore, North Buffalo and West Buffalo. However, if you do not reside in one of these areas, help can be provided with linkage to the appropriate Case Management Agency for assistance. **For more information, contact Alicia Lombardo at alombardo@people-inc.org or call 716.768.2357.**

People Inc. Senior Companion Program assists older adults (55 and over and meet income eligibility) throughout all of Erie County. Some of the services you may benefit from include light housekeeping and cooking, shopping and errands, transportation to appointments, friendly visitation and much more. The program is also recruiting for volunteers to provide this assistance. **For more information or if you are interested in becoming a Senior Companion Volunteer, contact Alissa Yax at ayax@people-inc.org or call 716.768.2381.**

People Inc. Senior Living operates affordable, safe apartments for older adults, who are income eligible, with an annual household income not to exceed the Federal income limits. Each apartment consists of one bedroom, kitchen with appliances, bathroom and a living/dining area. Some utilities included. Numerous safety features are included. Tenants may have one small pet. There are 20 apartment complexes, located in communities that offer tenants the ability to stay connected to friends and family. **For more information, call 716.817.9090.**



People Inc. Affordable Apartments

People Inc. Affordable Apartments Services provide reasonably-priced, safe apartments in our community to those who are income-eligible. Each apartment consists of one- or two-bedrooms, kitchen with appliances, bathroom and a living/dining area. Some of these communities are for people 18 and over and others have an age requirement of 55 and over. Adaptable apartments are available, with some that are specifically designed for people who have mobility and vision challenges or for people who are Deaf or hard of hearing. With multiple locations accepting applications, our Affordable Apartments are located throughout Erie and Niagara Counties. **For more information, email housing@people-inc.org or call 716.880.3890.**



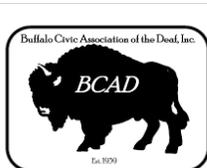
Elizabeth Harvey Apartments



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TRI-MAIN CENTER
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